

A BASIC GUIDE
TO THE WINDOWS, STATUES and ARTWORK
IN
MOST HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK



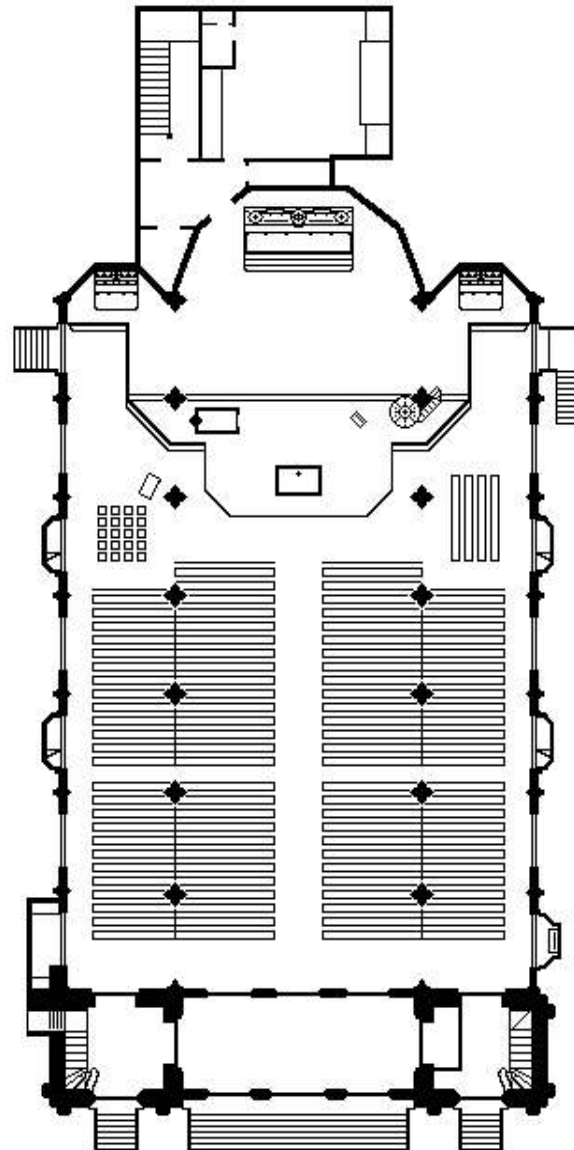
_____ “Francie thought it was the most beautiful church in Brooklyn. It was made of old gray stone and had twin spires that rose cleanly into the sky, high above the tallest tenements. Inside, the high vaulted ceilings, narrow deepset stained-glass windows and elaborately carved altars made it a miniature cathedral.”

Betty Smith, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943) 390.

Betty Smith was born on December 15, 1896 as Elisabetha Wehner (child of Joannes Wehner and Katharina Hommel); according to the Baptismal Registry of this church, she was baptized by the Reverend Nicholas M. Wagner here (then simply known as “Holy Trinity”) on January 24, 1897. In her best-selling novel, Smith wrote about a girl named Francie who grew up in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Although Trinity is never mentioned by name, the author clearly refers to her own church.

Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York
Location and Theme of each of the Stained Glass Windows

Main Arcade Level:



7a and 7b

Blessed Virgin Mary,
the child Jesus and Saint Dominic

6a and 6b

St. Joachim and St. Anne
with the child Mary

5a and 5b

Baptism of Jesus
by Saint John the Baptist

4a and 4b

St. Elizabeth of Hungary and
Blessed Ludwig of Thuringia

3a and 3b

St. Scholastica and
St. Benedict

2a and 2b

No saints pictured
in this window

1a and 1b

No saints pictured
in this window

8a and 8b

Blessed Virgin Mary,
the child Jesus and Saint Catherine

9a and 9b

The Holy Family
St. Elizabeth with the child John

10a and 10b

St. Peter
St. Paul

11a and 11b

St. Nicholas of Myra
St. George

12a and 12b

St. Margaret of Antioch
St. Wenceslaus

13a and 13b

St. Patick of Ireland
St. Stephen the Martyr

14a and 14b

St. Anthony of Padua
St. John of God

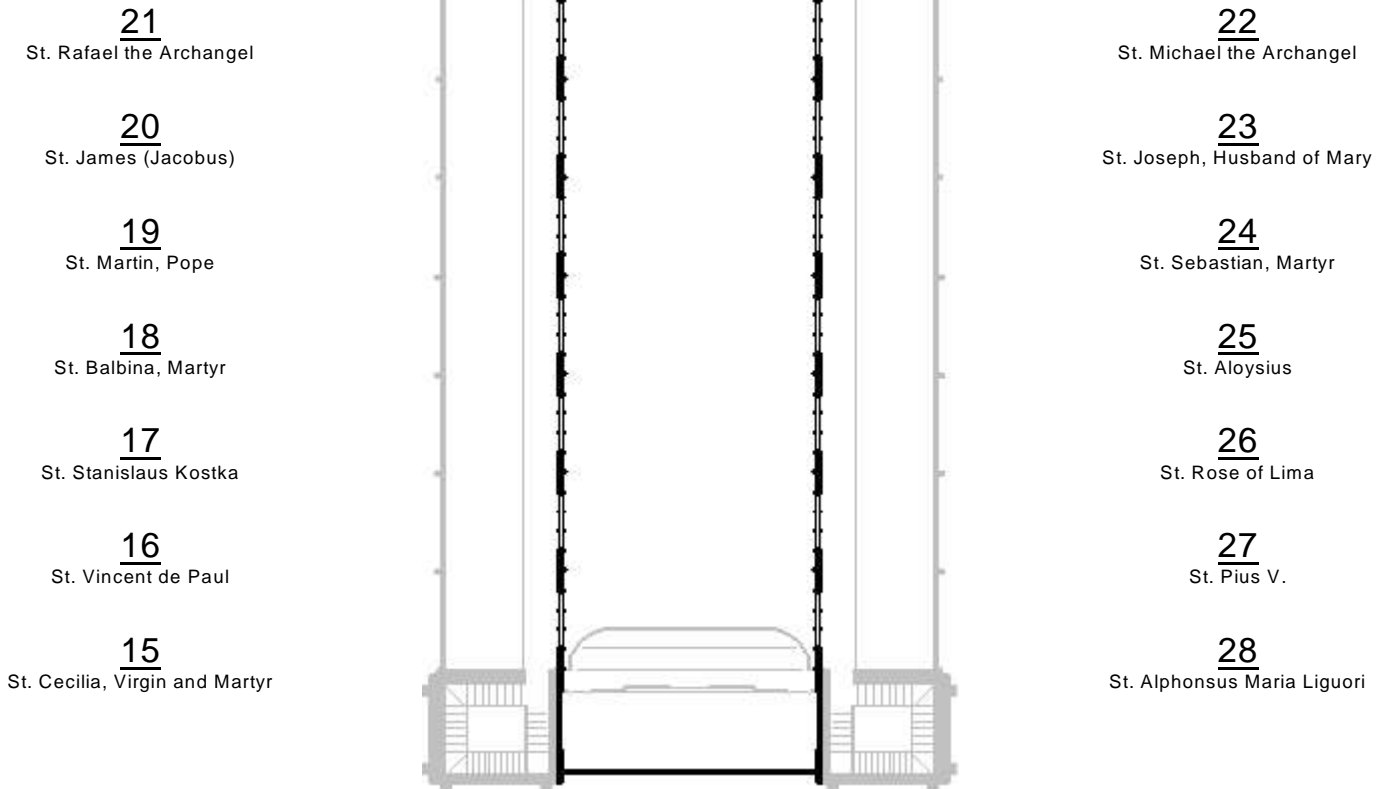
These windows were gifts of the following people or parish societies:

3a&b: Rev. Nicholas Balleis; 4a&b: the Saint Elizabeth's Society; 5a&b: Johann Timmes; 6a&b: Godfried Jager, Ludwig Storer and Eduard MacCarthy; 7a&b: William Schickel, who was the architect of this church building; 8a&b: the Dominican Sisters; 9a&b: Adam and Elizabeth Schlemel; 10a&b: **Because of a fire in 1972 that destroyed the original lower panels of this window, the names of the donors have been lost; 11a&b: Nicolaus Geyer and George Stelz; 12a&b: the Hanselmann Family; 13a&b: the Power Brothers; 14a: Anton Schimmel; 14b: St. Catherine's Hospital.

Financial records from 1884 and 1885, when money was collected for the windows, give the names of all those who contributed, large or small; the names of all the major donors can be found on the windows, except the **Precious Blood Society (\$240.00), **Rev. John Koeburle** (\$240.00), **Mr. Crusier** (\$212.00) and **Peter Bitterman** (\$250.00). There is no doubt that before the fire, one or more of these donors' names appeared on window 10 on the main arcade level.

Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York
Location and Theme of each of the Stained Glass Windows

Clear Storey Level–Sides:

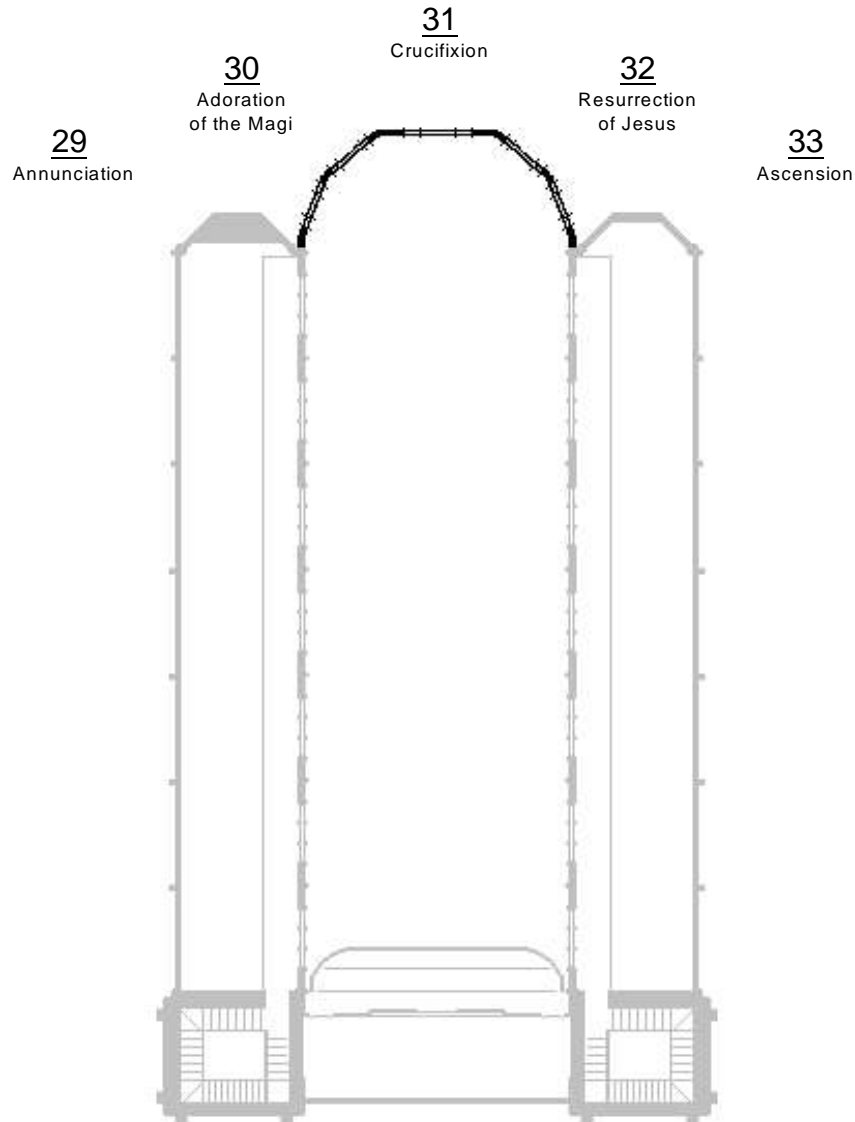


These windows were gifts of the following people or parish societies:

15: the **St. Cecilia Society and Gustaf Nahngartner, Casper Berner and the Family of Joseph Kunz**; 16: the **Orphan Society and Philip Auer**; 17: the **Christian Boys Society**; 18: **Joseph and Balbina Zoll**; 19: the **St. Martin's Society**; 20: the **St. Jacobus Society and Elizabeth Ganter**; 21: the **St. Rafael's Society and Philipp and Catherine Schmitt**; 22: the **St. Michael's Society**; 23: the **St. Joseph's Society**; 24: the **St. Sebastian's Society and Johann Auer**; 25: the **St. Aloysius Young Men's Society**; 26: the **Young Christian Women's Apprentices**; 27: the **St. Pius Society**; 28: the **St. Alphonsus Society and Joseph and Agatha Vetter**.

Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York
Location and Theme of each of the Stained Glass Windows

Clear Storey Level–Chancel:



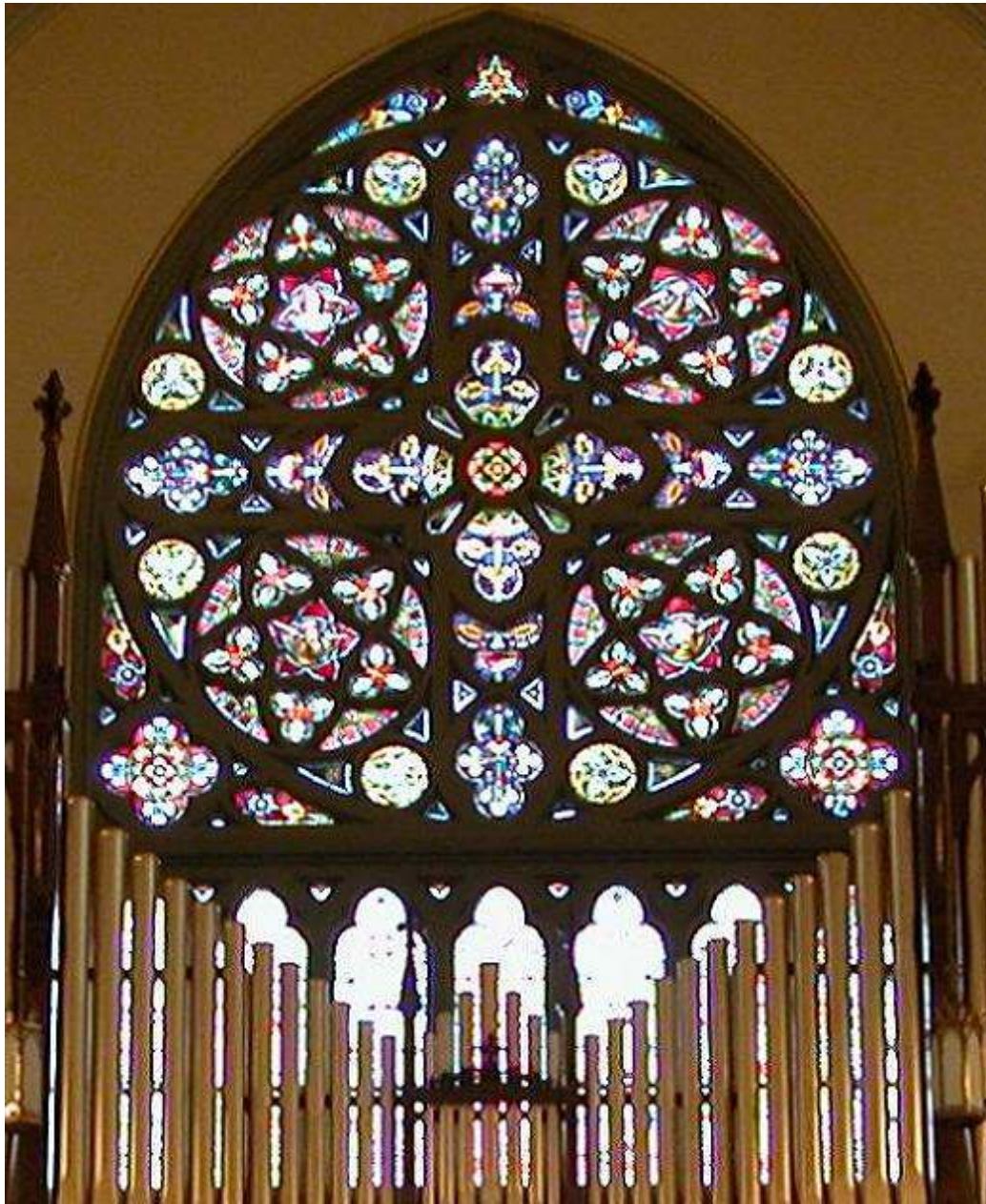
These windows were gifts of the following people or parish societies:

29: *The Female Virgin's Society*; 30: *Thomas & Angela Haslach*; 31: *Rev. Michael May, who was the pastor when the present church building was built*; 32: *Rev. Peter Schwarz*; 33: *the Berlenback Family*

When they were purchased and installed in 1885, each of these windows costs \$500.00 each; adjusted for inflation, that is about \$7,000.00 in 2004 dollars.

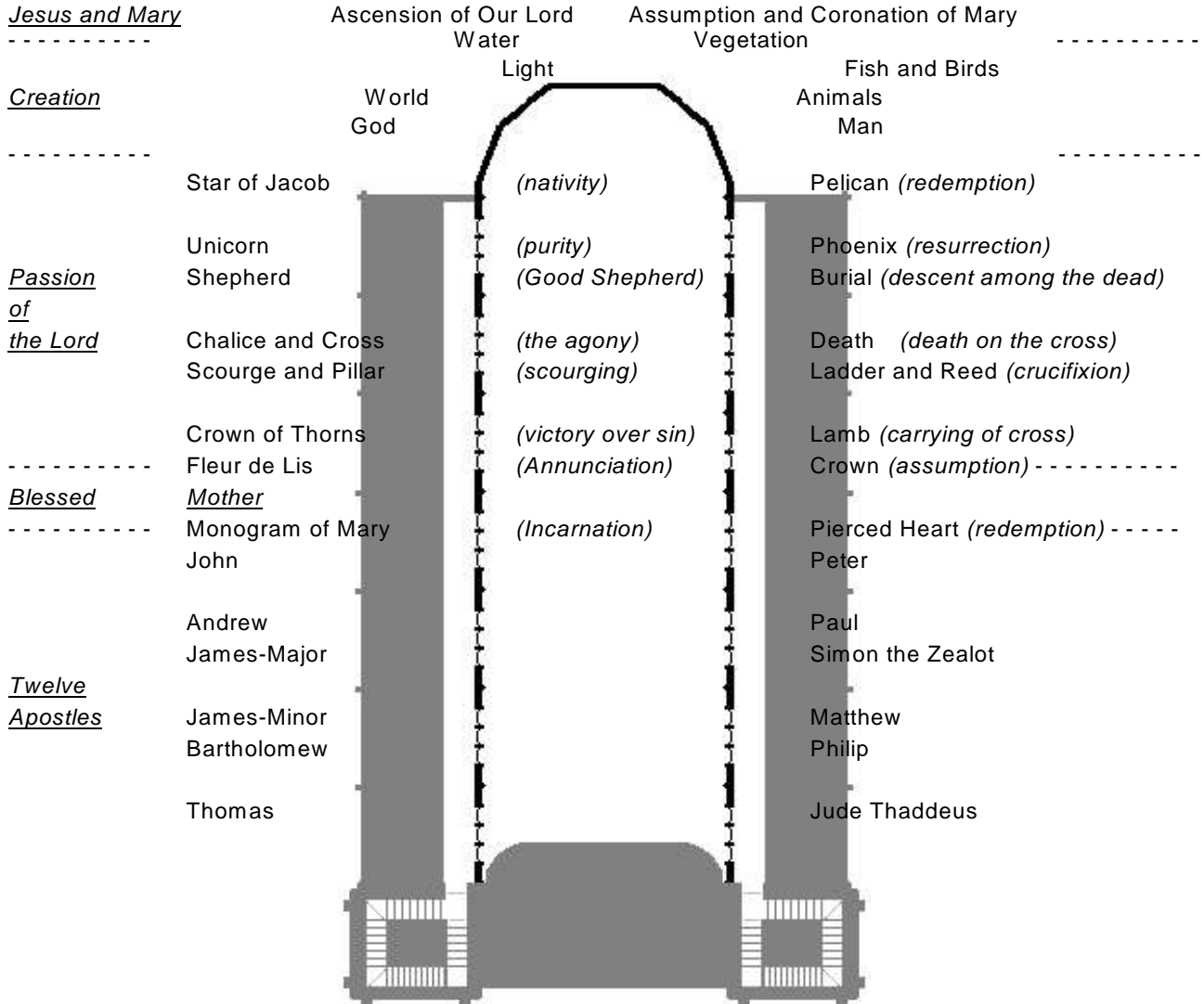
Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York
Location and Theme of each of the Stained Glass Windows

Our Magnificent Rose Window



The Central or Rose Window above the entrance to the church is thirty-six feet high and twenty-two feet wide. It has a frame of stone that was imported from Wurzburg, Germany. The window is decorated with symbols of the Four Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York
Location and Title of each Symbol located on (in the Chancel)
and just below (in the main arcade) the Triforium Level



Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York Location and Title of each Painting

In the Sanctuary (in the Chancel from left to right):

C1. **Michael the Archangel** C2. **Cain and Abel** C3. **Holy Trinity/Angels** C4. **Melchizedek** C5. **Abraham and Isaac**

C6. **Choirs of Angels** high above

Graham Ave. Side Altar:

S1. **Moses, the people, and Mannah in the Desert**

S2. **Angels**

S3. **Elijah and the Angel**

Manhattan Ave. Side Altar:

S4. **St. Francis of Assisi**
receiving the Sacred
Stigmata

S5. **Angels**

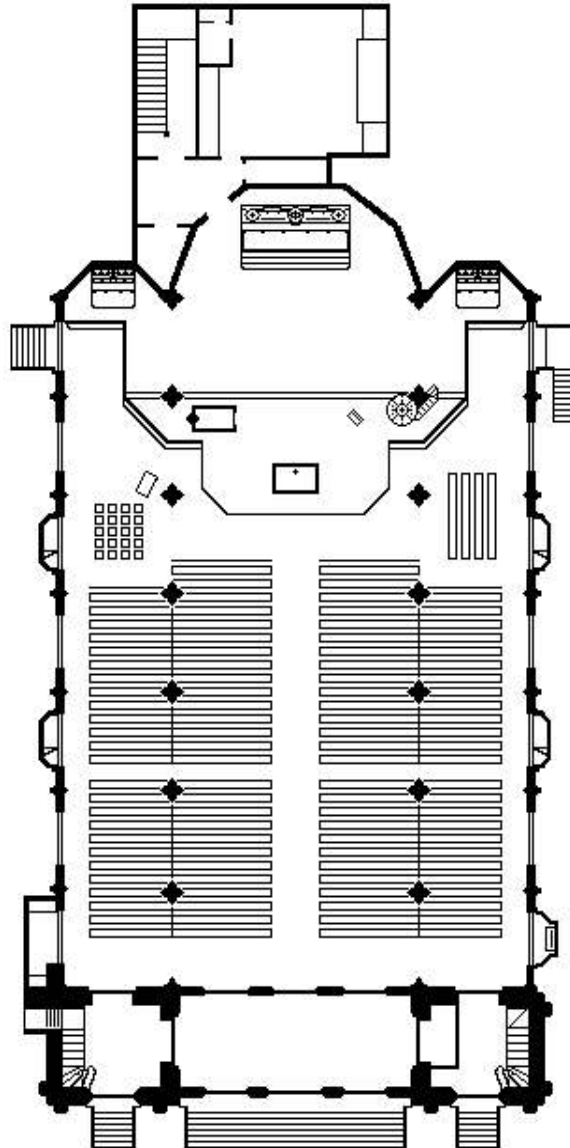
S6. **St. Clare of Assisi** raising
Monstrance in defense of her
Convent.

Above Graham Ave. side Entrance

E1. **Jacob's Dream**

Above Manhattan Ave. Side Entrance:

E2. **Moses** and the burning bush



It should be noted that the magnificent paintings in this church were done by the renowned German artist **Wilhelm Lamprecht** (1838-1922). Lamprecht studied at the Munic Royal Academy of art between 1859 and 1867. He spent most of his career in the United States painting churches in Boston, Brooklyn, Cincinnati, Chicago, New York and Philadelphia. His most famous work, "Fr. Marquette and the Indians" (1889), owned by Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, appeared on a one cent US postal stamp issued in 1898. Lamprecht returned to Germany in 1901 and died there in 1922.

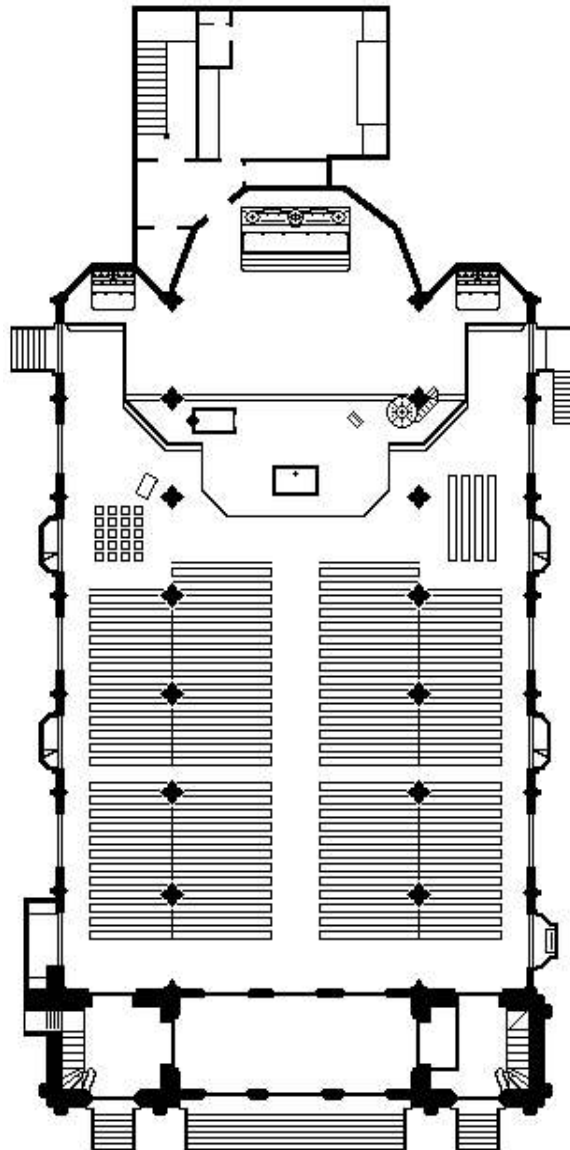
Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York
Location of each Statue

In the Sanctuary (in the Chancel from left to right):

- C1. St. Joseph C2. St. Boniface C3. St. Anne with Mary C4. St. Elizabeth of Hungary C5. St. Walburga

Incorporated into the High Altar

- C6. St. **Peter** (on left side)
 C7. St. **Paul** (on right side)
 C8. **Choirs of Angels** (atop the pedestal of the spire)



Incorporated into the Pulpit

Lower part

- P1. St. **Matthew**
 P2. **Angel** holding the **Ten Commandments**
 P3. St. **Mark**
 P4. **Angel** holding banner reading: "**Gloria in Excelsis Deo**"
 P5. St. **Luke**
 P6. Angel holding **Chalice**
 P7. St. **John**
 P8. Angel holding **Crown of Thorns**

Upper Part

- P9. St. **Jerome**
 P10. St. **Gregory the Great**
 P11. St. **Ambrose**
 P12. St. **Augustine**

Within the spire

- P13 The **Blessed Virgin Mary**

Sacred Heart Side Altar:

- S1. St. **Francis of Assisi** to the far left.
 S2. Small statue of St. **Agnes of Montepulciano** to the left of the Sacred Heart
 S3. **Sacred Heart of Jesus**
 S4. Small statue of St. **Thomas Aquinas** with the Summa Theologica in hand to the right of the Sacred Heart.

Near Graham Ave. side Entrance

- E1. St. **Frances Xavier (Mother) Cabrini**

Blessed Mother Side Altar:

- S5. Small statue of St. **Ignatius of Loyola** to the left.
 S6. **Blessed Mother**
 S7. Small statue of St. **Dominic** to the right.
 S8. St. **Anthony of Padua** to the far right.

Within Devotional Niche (Manhattan Ave. side)

- N1. **Our Lady of Sorrows**

Near Manhattan Ave. Side Entrance:

- E2. St. **Theresa of the Child Jesus**

Most Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, New York **Additional Information**

Some interesting details about the history and architecture of Most Holy Trinity Church:

1. This is the third Holy Trinity Church building to occupy this block (the first was built in 1841 and the second in 1853—both have since been demolished).
2. The building fund (or fund-raising effort) for this Church was started in 1872.
3. The cornerstone reads “1883” and was laid on May 18, 1882 (Ascension Thursday).
4. The construction of the Church was completed in 1885.
5. The Church cost over \$300,000.00 to build (adjusted for inflation, that is more than four million in 2004 dollars)
6. It was designed by renowned German architect William Schickel.
7. The style of the present Church is French Gothic of the 13th century.
8. The front of the Church and towers are constructed of Belleville Stone.
9. The Central or Rose Window above the entrance to the church is thirty-six feet high and twenty-two feet wide
10. In the Main Arcade, Clear Storey and Chancel, the Church has thirty-three stained glass windows; two of the windows have simple designs of vines and leaves, the others are breathtakingly beautiful.
11. The towers are 250 feet tall; the left tower (Graham Avenue side) was completed in 1884, the right tower in 1890 (for six years the right tower stood only as high as the roof of the main part of the structure.
12. All of the bells together, located in the left tower, weigh approximately 10,074 pounds.
13. The Church is 170 feet long and 82 feet wide.
14. Inside, the distance between the floor and the crown of the arch in the ceiling is 70 feet.
15. The original organ (nothing of which is left) was installed in the Church in 1886 for a total cost of \$10,000 (adjusted for inflation, that is about \$140,000.00 in 2004 dollars).
16. The old High Altar is 27 feet high and 12 feet wide—it was installed in 1886 for a total cost of \$6,000.00; the altar itself is marble, while it's reredos is of Caen stone.
17. The side altars match the design of the High Altar on a smaller scale; they were installed in 1886 for a total cost of \$3,500.00.
18. The pulpit was installed in 1886 at the cost of \$2,000.00 (adjusted for inflation, that about \$28,000.00 in 2004 dollars)
19. The Stations of the Cross were installed in 1886 for a total cost of \$1,400.00.
20. The Church was restored or renovated in 1916, during the 75th Anniversary, in 1941, during the 100th Anniversary and again in the year 2000.
21. Fr. John Raffener, the first pastor, and Fr. Michael May, the second pastor and builder of the present Church, are entombed in the basement crypt of the building (Fr. Raffener died in 1861; his body was first interred in Most Holy Trinity [at Evergreen] Cemetery and then brought to the Church after construction was completed in 1885).
22. The first Mass in the Church was celebrated on August 23, 1885. On that day the Church was dedicated by Bishop John Loughlin of Brooklyn and Bishop Francis X. Krautbauer of Green Bay, Wisconsin (Bishop Krautbauer died suddenly the same year on December 17th).
23. It was Consecrated by Bishop William Wigger of Newark on September 9, 1891.

These pages were compiled by Fr. Timothy P. Dore, OFM Conv., Parochial Vicar, October 18, 2004, Feast of St. Luke the Evangelist.